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**NOTES OF THE WEEK.**

to Germany, the latter supplementing her shipments by imports from the United States.

The Parliamentary Committee appointed to inquire into the conduct of medical examinations under the Military Service Acts is eliciting some remarkable evidence. On Monday two circulars issued by Surgeon-General Bedford, Deputy Director of Medical Services in the Northern Command, were read. In the first, of September 1916, he declared that every man of any potential use whatever in the Army for any form of service must be made available for such service. In the second, of 22 June, he spoke of inspecting labour battalions and being shocked to see the specimens of humanity accepted, including men almost totally blind, men of doubtful intellect, and men almost unable to stand, even "cases of paresis which rendered locomotion almost grotesque". A member of the Committee asked if it would be unfair to suggest that the two circulars were cause and effect, and got the reply, "Some people might think so".

A good many people find the present war bread not only unpalatable, but also indigestible. On Monday official views on the subject were given to the Press. We must be prepared to go on eating bread made from flour with substantial admixtures from other cereals. Economy in the use of wheat is all-important, but it is suggested that millers and bakers will produce better results in the course of time. A committee of scientific experts are considering the question of digestibility and the advantages of milling to various standards. We hope their report will be soon available. The use of badly made flour is admitted in certain districts, but most of the mills are said to "have overcome their difficulties in a most satisfactory way". Our own experience shows that home-made bread is much more palatable than that usually sold to the public. The suggestion that the mixture of flour should be standardised is declared to be impracticable, and equally so the reduction or prohibition of the use of substitutes. "Rope" disease has made its appearance in bread sporadically throughout the country, but this is ascribed not to the use of admixtures, but to the warmth and excessive moisture of exceptional weather. The baker, further, has tended to underbaking, in order to maintain an exact weight, and by covering his loaves with cloths has encouraged "rope". Maize will have an increasing part in our bread, as it can be imported freely. Altogether, with more scientific knowledge and more experience among the bakers, we may expect bread to improve in quality.

It is difficult, if not impossible, for anyone but a German to understand the play of parties in the Reichstag, or to know what to believe in the statements of a strictly controlled and officially inspired Press. If one may trust the telegrams from Amsterdam and the extracts from the German newspapers given here, a section (how large we know not) of the Central Clerical party agrees with the Social-Democratic party in demanding the direct election of the Reichstag by a low franchise, and the personal responsibility of the Imperial Chancellor and the other Ministers to the Reichstag. Such a demand, if conceded, would mean a political revolution, to which we are not surprised that the Conservative or Agricultural party is opposed.

there with not a window, not a gleam of light, or any ventilation". It may console wives who find it sometimes difficult to get repairs done, that it took Mrs. Lloyd George "some time before I could persuade the Board of Works to build me a nice little scullery".

But worse remains behind: "When Mr. Asquith came to 10, Downing Street there was not a bathroom." Think of it! Mr. Asquith, the Hedonist, the apostle of the apolaustic life, to arrive, weary and travel-stained at the Mecca of politicians and to find no bathroom! We may be quite sure that marble and porcelain baths galore were installed with the least possible delay. The late Lord Playfair stated at some meeting of savants that for a thousand years no man or woman took a bath in Europe. The absence of a bathroom in 10, Downing Street is not, we think, due to the fact that our Prime Ministers did not wash, but rather to the fact that they did not, for twenty-five years before Mr. Asquith's advent, live at No. 10, Downing Street. Lord Salisbury preferred his big, if somewhat ugly, house in Arlington Street to the official residence, and his nephew, Mr. Arthur Balfour, was quite content to remain in Carlton Gardens. Mr. Asquith's predecessor, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, likewise refused to leave his own roof in Grosvenor Place.

Thus No. 10, Downing Street was probably allowed to fall into an indifferent state of repair. It may be remembered that Gladstone got up a quarrel with the outgoing Disraeli in 1869 as to the purchase of furniture, the letters beginning with "Dear Sir", dropping to "Sir", and ending by "Mr. Disraeli presents his compliments and would be obliged". The prettiest story in connection with No. 10, Downing Street is that relating to Lord North's baby daughter. Lord North, as Prime Minister, was living at No. 10 during the Gordon riots in 1780. The sky was red with the flames of burning houses, and the streets were filled with murderous mobs. Lord North's little girl was snatched out of the nursery and, carefully wrapped up, was carried round the corner to the officers' guard at the Horse Guards in Whitehall. There on the table in the middle of the guardroom, gazed upon by the giants with their nodding plumes, the little lady lay.

The return of the Sinn Feiner for East Clare by a majority of 2,975 is an ill omen for the success of the Convention. Between the Sinn Feiners and the other members of the Convention, the Ulstermen and the Nationalists, there is no common ground for discussion. How is it possible to discuss the establishment of an independent Irish Republic which, with Lough Swilly and Bantry Bay in its possession, would command the Atlantic? The Sinn Feiners were willing to receive Casement—a loathsome monster—and to welcome a German landing. They are simply rebels in war time, who, in any other country but Ireland, would be shot. We have never been able to



## THE GOVERNMENT'S DEFENCE.

WE wish that the defence of London was as good as the defence of the Government. Put shortly, the Prime Minister's apology is that there are not enough aeroplanes to supply the front and to defend London, and that rightly the front must be served first. This is an unanswerable answer to the clamour of the Press and the natural anger of the public. That the number of air machines is being largely and rapidly increased, as fast as half a million hands can make them, is all that we are told and all that we ought to be told. To publish the number of aeroplanes being made, the places where they are being made, and the dates when they will be ready would be madness. It was these details, these figures and dates, that the Prime Minister gave to the House of Commons in secret session.

The position as admitted by the Government is serious enough. It is literally true that when a man or woman leaves his or her home in the morning he or she may return in the evening to find it in ruins. That this should be predicable of the Metropolis of the Empire is horrible evidence of the nature of modern war when waged by an enemy who is bound by no law of God or man. The conduct of the Germans in bombing from the sea and from the air places like Scarborough, Lowestoft, Margate, and London comes nearer to the cold malignity of a wicked spirit than the frailty and passion of a man. But it is a spirit whose malice is only exceeded by its stupidity. The Germans cannot win the war by either submarines or air raids; but they can enormously swell the bill of costs that one day or another will have to be paid, in meal or in malt, in blood or in money. If the war were to end next week or next month in a stalemate—the most favourable issue the maddest pan-German can hope for—the store of hatred which the Germans have deliberately incurred will last for three generations, and will not only make them social pariahs, but must seriously injure their international trade. Each of us has experienced how much personal popularity or the reverse affects success or failure in life. What is true of the dealings between individuals in the same country is true of their transactions with the individuals of a foreign country. The Germans may rest assured that no British or French house will buy more from them than is absolutely necessary to their trade. We do not know enough of the Italian national character to guess how they will feel about trading with Germans after the war. The Americans are too far away, have too large a German element in their midst, and have suffered (as yet) too little in the war to share the intense bitterness of Frenchmen and Britons. But to lose France and Great Britain and the British Colonies as willing customers is part of the immeasurable loss which the Hohenzollerns have inflicted on their sheep-like subjects.

It is reassuring to know from the Prime Minister that the present state of things cannot continue long. On looking back at the events of Saturday, 7 July, we are astonished that more damage was not done. A certain number of the victims were injured by shrapnel from our own guns because they were in the street. This leads to the question of warnings. It is quite right that the preference in the matter of warning should be given to munition works, hospitals, and Government offices. But if the warning is extended beyond these to private buildings the warning must be given to all alike. It is, for instance, a complaint that "Lloyd's" was warned and the "Baltic" was not. We do not know whether this is true; but obviously all must be warned or none. The Home Secretary has told us that the Government are considering how they may issue warnings to the public without unduly interfering with business, and with this we must rest content.

All this is cold comfort to those who have suffered and to those who dwell in dread of suffering. No doubt the Government ought to have foreseen the

development of aircraft, as they ought to have foreseen the development of submarines. But the statesmen, no more than the chemists or geologists or financiers, whose eagle eye can pierce the darkness of the future and make their arrangements accordingly, have not yet appeared in any party or any nation. We must perforce put up with such rulers as the country can produce; and as the Government is composed of the leaders of all parties, we do not quite understand what those who demand the heads of the Ministers on a charger propose to do. We understand that one of those familiar manœuvres known as "strengthening the Government" is on foot. The Dundee meeting, at which Mr. Winston Churchill appeared as the panegyrist of both Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Asquith, was a plumbline thrown out to sound the shallows of public opinion. What would the world infer from the Prime Minister's visit to Mr. Churchill's constituency? Lord Cowdray promptly drew his inference, and refused to resign the chairmanship of the Air Board. Mr. Montagu drew his inference, and, accepting office, was a little surprised to find his friends annoyed. It is true that the Mesopotamia Report has a little dashed the Prime Minister's bold idea of securing the return of Mr. Asquith and Mr. Churchill to the Government. But doubtless the public wrath will be assuaged by the emission of a scapegoat; and the same intermediary who intrigued Mr. Asquith out of office will smilingly reconduct him to the warm precincts. For our part we think the public has had enough of combinations and permutations, and craves for something new. The Cabinet has been reduced from twenty-two to five: we suggest a further reduction to three. A triumvirate has historical associations. We propose that a new Cabinet should be formed of Mr. Horatio Bottomley, Mr. Maxse, and Mr. Pemberton Billing, and that they should form a government of thirty, who should be selected by lot from the House of Commons, and whose sole qualification should be that they had none of them ever served in any previous Administration. They might live in history as the Thirty Tyros.

## EAST CLARE.

IT may be the second time in our history that a Clare election has proved the necessity of a new departure. The return of O'Connell for the county of Clare in 1828 forced Peel and Wellington to concede the claim of Catholic emancipation. It is possible that the return by East Clare of Eamonn de Valera, convicted rebel, sentenced to death and released, may force the present Government to discharge its first duty of protecting the islands of the United Kingdom from the danger of a rebellion, which is subsidised by Germany, and only wants arms to seize the ports which command the Atlantic. De Valera himself, according to the newspapers, appears to be of the common type of revolutionaries who swarm in the Bowery, a Spanish father, an Irish-American mother, born in New York. We presume that he is naturalised, and therefore capable of being elected, though in the present laxity of Irish administration we are by no means sure of it. But is a convicted rebel capable of sitting in the House of Commons? Will he take the oath or make the affirmation of allegiance to the King? Perjury, however, is a small matter compared with treason. What is the excuse for the commutation of the death penalty and for the release of the prisoners? We are told that the Sinn Féin conspiracy is not really a rebellion against the King, but against the Nationalist Members of Parliament. What have Messrs. Redmond and Dillon to do with the acceptance of the wretch Casement and the attempted landing of a German force? Had the coward Casement, stained with unmentionable crimes besides that of treason, had the courage to seize the telegraph office there would probably have been a rising throughout the West and South of Ireland.

We are impudently assured by the apologists of lawlessness that the Sinn Feiners are nice intellectual youths, the fine flower of Celtic culture, who dream visions of Irish regeneration. If the Sinn Feiners are really the representatives of Celtic culture, we can only say the noun should be spelt with a "K" instead of a "C".

On what grounds are men whose sole policy is the establishment of an independent Irish republic allowed to sit in a Convention whose object is to settle the future government of Ireland? A glance at the map will show anyone that an Irish Government in possession of Lough Swilly and Bantry Bay could prevent any ship sailing from or to the coast of England. These two bays are the gates of the Atlantic. If the Sinn Feiners succeed, these two harbours will become bases of German submarines. The moment that a Sinn Feiner rises to speak in the Convention all loyal subjects of the King ought to leave the room, for he will speak daggers and spit treason at every syllable. What a prospect for the Convention, the supreme device of our Government of supermen to meet an emergency with which they haven't the courage to grapple! There have been complaints in certain newspapers about Lord Newton, accompanied by a general and a judge, sitting down at the same table with German officers to discuss the treatment of prisoners. The very company of Huns is, we are told, pollution. But is a subject who levies war against his King whilst he is at war with others better or worse than a foreign enemy? We should say worse, but it is futile to discuss degrees of crime. Why should Mr. Redmond or Mr. Dillon or Lord Londonderry or Captain Craig or Sir John Lonsdale be invited to sit round a table with de Valera and Co.?

Putting aside the sentimental and highly mischievous twaddle about the intellectual character of Sinn Feinism, there is another reason advanced for the release of the prisoners and their admission to the Convention. We are told it is done to satisfy opinion in the United States and in Russia. So, then, we are to endanger the safety of the United Kingdom by tolerating treason and petting rebels in order to please the scum of Irish-American politics and to pander to the anarchists who are doing their best to ruin Russia! The policy of Great Britain is to be settled not in the Imperial Parliament but in the Nihilist clubs of Petrograd and Moscow, and in the mephitic dens where spout the mercenary patriots of Tammany! Has it really come to this?

If the old Liberal Party were in power this policy of subservience to Irish rebels would be, not defensible, but intelligible. Gladstone believed, conveniently for himself and friends, that the maintenance of the Liberal Party in power was the only way of saving England from revolution. He saw that the Liberal Party could only be kept in office by the Irish Nationalist vote, and so, by a characteristic chain of logic, he justified to himself the persistent sacrifice of British interests to Irish demands. This convenient doctrine Gladstone passed on to Campbell-Bannerman, who handed it to Mr. Asquith, who, nothing loth, used it to keep himself in office for eight years. But the Liberal Party is no longer in power. The present Government is not only unfettered by the Gladstonian tradition but it is no longer dependent on the Irish vote for a majority in the House of Commons. Why, then, does it pause and falter and blanch and quail before Irish sedition? The Government contains Lord Curzon and Lord Milner, Mr. Balfour, Sir Edward Carson, Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Duke. No two living men more perfectly understand the secret forces of Irish politics and the way to deal with them than Mr. Balfour and Sir Edward Carson. They made their reputation twenty-five years ago by dealing with them. Why do they now sit mute and complaisant whilst the sands in the glass are running out, and every hour is bringing us nearer to a struggle in which the inevitable victory will be only one degree less disgraceful than defeat?

## THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RUSSIAN VICTORIES.

### PROGRESS ON THE WESTERN FRONT.

**A**FTER nine days of almost consecutive fighting the southern group of Russian armies has definitely broken through the Austro-German line and has practically re-established the advantageous strategical position it enjoyed last year when internal dissension so suddenly called a halt to its career.

From a military point of view—particularly to that school of thought brought up in the German traditions—the German position seemed then quite hopeless; but, to the surprise of the world, the Germans went ahead with the utmost boldness, taking risks which simply staggered all onlookers with sublime unconcern because they knew what we hardly suspected—viz., that the propaganda of their secret services could be relied on to paralyse the Russian offensive for many months to come.

Of all these political advantages they now stand deprived, thanks to the will power of the Russian military leaders and the extraordinary loyalty of the Roumanians to their engagements, and the German Staff now stand confronted by what their own text books teach as the most hopeless of all situations—viz., the cordon defensive on a thousand mile front with inadequate numbers and practically no available reserves, and they know they have been driven into this position because their All-Highest Commander in his wisdom has allowed political expediency to override military necessity—the one deadly sin in the eyes of all students of Clausewitz.

In such a situation only extreme mobility can compensate for inferior numbers—a point their text books before the war invariably elaborated at exhaustive length—but again, because political purposes have been allowed to override military requirements, they stand denuded of their principal assets by the form which they themselves were the first to import into modern methods of warfare. The monstrous train of artillery they now find necessary to convey with them can only act in the vicinity of good roads and railways, and by extending their frontiers over the most roadless region almost in Europe, and thereby throwing increased strain on the existing and inadequate railways, they now find themselves in the worst possible position for meeting the dangers which lurk behind the existing fighting front of the Russian armies.

The problem now before them is briefly this: they not only have to find numbers to close the gaps the Russians are making, but to rail or march these numbers forward more rapidly than the enemy can kill and capture their immediate opponents.

At the time of writing the Russian captures have already exceeded 25,000 men, although the Berlin accounts lay stress on the heroic resistance of their own troops. The latest Russian official news announces the occupation after a severe struggle of the town of Kalusz, about fourteen miles north-west of Stanislaw. Kalusz is important as the headquarters of the enemy army, and the amount of prisoners is again reported to be large.

There is a great chance for striking hard and striking soon, for the whole German garrison of the Eastern front was already short by fourteen divisions sent into France of what a year ago was considered a minimum number. Some of these—seven, it is believed—are actually in the trains on their way eastward again, but only the heads of these columns can be within striking distance of the front as yet, and no one knows how soon our own offensive, which may presently be expected, will intervene to hold back the remainder, for the needs of the Western front must come first in any conceivable scheme the Germans may devise.

The Austrians certainly are in no condition to send assistance, for they, too, are being jealously watched by the Italians all ready to strike, and Bulgaria can certainly spare no one from the guard she is compelled



to keep against the Salonica contingent, now at last set free by the settlement, more or less, of the Greek entanglement.

From Turkey even less help, if possible, can be looked for. British troops in Bagdad and at Gaza, Russians in the Caucasus, hold all her available armies; and the extreme right wing of the Germans in Roumania is outnumbered and outgunned now by a reorganised, well-equipped, and well-fed army burning with the desire to drive the invaders out of their country.

Against all this the Germans have nothing to set except the hope that revolution may again paralyse the hands of their principal enemy, and their Staff have been far too well instructed in the history of the French Revolution to build greatly on such a slender foundation. In fact, the position in Russia at present is almost identical both in the army and the nation with that which existed in France at the beginning of 1796, when Napoleon broke up the Austrian cordon system—Clausewitz's favourite example of its weakness—with the news of his victories. Credit and confidence in Paris revived, and, though there were fluctuations in the recovery, the people of France as a whole never once went back on the cause of law and order in the abstract.

Meanwhile the German General Staff has seen fit to add to its embarrassments by attempting again the same desperate methods which cost them so dearly before Verdun. For ten days now fighting between Verdun and Rheims has practically never ceased. They have sought to distract the French commanders by attacking their left, right, and centre in order, sometimes in local action of intense concentration, sometimes on a broad front of several miles, but not one in ten of their efforts has succeeded in reaching and holding for more than a few hours small sections of the first line trenches. All other attacks have been beaten off even more bloodily than before Verdun by the extraordinary regulation and precision of the French artillery fire. We know now through the French Staff that on the whole during the Verdun period the Germans lost not less than four men to their one, and it is possible that this rate has been even exceeded lately, as the Germans have often crowded their men on even more densely than was their former practice.

As long as the Germans will continue this process there is every reason why our own attacks, which have been so long expected, should be held back. The Allies, as a whole, want to be absolutely certain of the disposition of the German reserves before committing themselves to an advance. If the French stood in need of immediate assistance we should give it, precisely as we offered to do at the crisis of the Verdun fighting, and this is the best answer to those who are playing the enemy's game by spreading rumours calculated to breed distrust of our loyalty among the French people. Fortunately, the French people now are practically the French army, and the latter have been sufficiently instructed as to our conduct during their dark hours last year to know that we held back then by the express desire of their own General Staff. They wanted to make absolutely certain of the result before asking the British to strike in, and but for the sudden and complete collapse of the Russian offensive, which in fact struck our Western Headquarters almost with the force of a blow, our Somme offensive, combined with the operations of our Allies in the East, would have brought us much nearer to the beginning of the end of the long struggle.

#### PRESIDENT WILSON'S HOLY ALLIANCE.

UNDER the joint impulsion of the American President and the Russian revolutionary committees the Western Allies are drifting into a strange and very doubtful argumentative position. Mr. Lloyd George with apparent zeal, M. Ribot with obvious

reluctance, and Signor Sonnino with a very bad grace indeed have all thought proper to recite the new confession of faith which has been propounded at Petrograd and Washington. The Allied nations have been given to understand that we are fighting to suppress the Hohenzollerns and to confer on all peoples, more especially upon the German people, the boon of "democracy". According to this reading of the matter we have no quarrel with the Germanic populations, but, on the contrary, are animated by the most benevolent sentiments towards them. It seems that we are really fighting as much for their benefit as our own. We propose to deliver them from their brutal militarism, to release them from the rule of dynastic autocracy, and to give free play to all their nobler instincts by means of genuine Parliamentary government or perhaps even by the stimulating warmth of republican institutions.

It is certainly very kind of us, and shows a super-Christian tendency to return good for evil. As a reward for rape and pillage in France, for robbery and massacre and enslavement in Belgium, for the wholesale murder of British merchant seamen and passengers, for the killing of women and children and old men in our towns, for the shooting of Miss Cavell and Captain Fryatt, for the ill-treatment of our prisoners and wounded, for the broken pledges, the lies, the treacheries, the perjuries, and all the other infamies of the past three years we are to make our enemies happy, contented, prosperous, and tranquil. *Ex hypothesi* democracy does all these things: the country that receives it is thrice blessed. And it is this blessing we are determined to bestow upon Germany, so that this fortunate country will really gain much more than ourselves by our victory. It must be singularly comforting to the men who limp homeward maimed from the trenches and to the fathers and mothers whose boys lie dead in Flanders to reflect on this remarkable result of their efforts and sacrifices. And we hope British and American taxpayers will be consoled for having thousands of millions piled on to their national debts by the thought that with the money they will have bought political emancipation—for Germany!

On the other hand, it may occur to a good many of the aforesaid Britons and Americans that it is no business of ours to bring social well-being and political stability to Germany, assuming that democracy would produce such results. Still less is it our function to remodel the institutions of that country in accordance with the ideas of our own advanced thinkers. There is no proof whatever that the Germans are yearning to throw off the Hohenzollern yoke, or that they have been dragooned into war against their inclinations. It was not the Hohenzollerns who caused respectable German families in Berlin and Cologne and New York to celebrate the "Lusitania" massacre with feasting and revelry. It was not the Hohenzollerns who set the whole German Press raving with the foulest outcries of hatred against England, and induced German matrons to congratulate one another when they were told that the Zeppelins had set the streets of London running with the blood of English women and English children. And though it may be true that the Kaiser could have prevented the war, it does not appear that his subjects are in the smallest degree discontented with him for not preventing it. On the contrary, they went in with him, heart and soul; and if his expectations and theirs had been fulfilled by speedy and complete success, there is every reason to suppose that they would have supported him in exacting the last pound of flesh, the last ounce of gold, and the last inch of territory from their defeated antagonists.

The truth is that we are waging war against the German nation, and it is unctuous and rather absurd to pretend that our quarrel is only with a group of princes, soldiers, and officials at Potsdam and Berlin. The world would look more insane than ever if it were worth all this terrific effort to get rid of a

swollen-headed potentate and his string of satellites. Moreover, the argument makes nonsense of another proposition strongly insisted upon by its authors. We declare that one of our main objects in the war is that of vindicating the right of every nation to decide its own destinies. Why, then, should we deny this right to the Germans? If they prefer to be saddled with their abominable dynasty it is not our duty, any more than it is in our interest, to liberate them. Why should we force democracy on a people who apparently do not want it and are very ill-equipped to use it properly?

The pretext is dishonest, and it may land us in highly inconvenient consequences. President Wilson is forming a new Holy Alliance. The Continental autocrats in 1818 banded themselves together to maintain the principles of Christianity and legality, as they conceived them, in the internal government of nations. They believed, in perfect good faith, that liberalism and freedom of thought were immoral and dangerous, and they interfered on all sides to suppress movements that threatened the established order. If the Allies are to make a similar test of democracy, they may find themselves committed to similar responsibilities. Nothing would be less likely to promote the future peace of the world than that the United States, France, and Great Britain should undertake to supervise the political constitutions of other countries, great or small. If they make peace on the basis of the dethronement of the Hohenzollerns, are they going to intervene forcibly to prevent a restoration of the dynasty? Will they apply the same principles elsewhere? Suppose that our Russian friends grow tired of democracy and bring back Tsarism in some form. Having fought to make democracy triumphant among the Teutons, are we to sit still and see it brought to nought among the Slavs? We are using a two-edged weapon when we begin to dictate methods of government to other peoples. Russian patriots have not hesitated to inform us that the reasoning which authorises us to upset autocracy in Prussia entitles them to demand revolution for India, Ireland, and Egypt, and they urge that the Conference which settles the fate of Germany should also discuss the affairs of the British Empire! If the world is to be forcibly remodelled to a "democratic" pattern it is difficult to see where the process is to stop.

We are fighting for quite other objects than these, and our statesmen, in their natural desire to make things easy for President Wilson and M. Kerensky, ought not to go too far in lending countenance to a dangerous and untenable doctrine. Whatever may be the case with the confused enthusiasts of the Workers' and Soldiers' Committee, Englishmen are not shedding their blood (nor, for that matter, are the majority of Americans prepared to do so) to make democracy, or any other political system, prevail either in Germany or elsewhere. They are fighting, in the first place, in order to defend themselves and their Allies against an attack which menaces their existence; secondly, to exact punishment and reparation for intolerable wrongs. The Minister or the President who sacrificed lives by the hundred thousand for any abstract cause, however lofty or noble, would deserve to be sent to the scaffold, as Britons and Americans would admit if the issue were clearly placed before them in that form. We went to war because Germany invaded Belgium, attacked France, and threatened our own security; the United States went to war because their citizens were denied the freedom to convey themselves and their goods across the high seas in safety. Our specific objects will have been achieved when we shall have compelled Germany to make retribution for these injuries and obtained guarantees against their repetition. And our claim against the German nation would not be weakened by one iota if it were to reform its constitution on the fullest lines of responsible or republican government. Very likely it will pretend to do so when it sees that the military and U-boat game is up and finds itself

compelled to ask for peace, and thereby it might set a very awkward trap for the Allied negotiators if they keep on insisting that the Hohenzollerns and the Hapsburgs are their real enemies, and that they are only too anxious to clasp the deluded subjects of those aggressive monarchs in a fraternal and democratic embrace.

#### THE STATE AS PUBLICAN.

WHEN Henry George (the American) made a hit with his book, on Land Nationalisation someone asked Gladstone what he thought of the policy. "If", was the reply, "the State buys the land at a fair price it is a fool; if it buys the land at an unfair price it is a robber". Gladstone was seldom so short and clear; but what he said of the State purchase of land may be applied, *mutatis mutandis*, to the State purchase of the Liquor Trade. If the State buys out the brewers at a fair price it is risking an enormous sum of public money in a speculative business, which may or may not be remunerative. If the State buys out the brewers at an unfair price, i.e., a price depreciated by a packed tribunal and improper canons of valuation, it is simply robbing a very large class of citizens of hundreds of millions of money.

In the first eighteen months of the war the profits of the brewery companies fell off, in 1916 they rose substantially; then came the restriction of barrelage (the results of which are not yet known), the relaxation of that restriction, the threat of State purchase, and finally the postponement to a future date of the discussion. Those interested in the manufacture and sale of beer and spirits have had an anxious time, and they would do well to turn the year's breathing space to the task of settling amongst themselves what their policy is to be.

The trouble is that "the Trade" is not united in its views of the future, which is natural, seeing that the conditions of one brewery or group of breweries differ from those of another. It is, however, important that the Trade should agree upon some policy, as a house divided against itself is bound to fall. It surely is the duty of the stronger brethren to protect the weaker. Not only are the brewers and distillers not agreed upon any policy, but even upon the same board you will find some of the directors in favour of State purchase and some of them against. This fact points to the necessity of ventilating the subject by inquiry, by argument, and by consultation.

The owners and directors of brewery and distillery companies seem to us to be divided into three classes: 1. Those who are in favour of selling to the State on the principle of agreeing with your adversary quickly lest a worse thing befall you. 2. Those who believe that they will get such good terms of purchase from the State that they will be able to live happily ever afterwards without the bother of business. 3. Those who are against selling to the State because they are sure they will be swindled over the purchase, and because they wish to stick to their own. The first class belong to those timorous owners of property who on the approach of the Socialist enemy with fixed bayonet throw up their hands and cry, "Kamerad". They are cowards, and deserve to be captured and stripped at leisure by their opponents. The second class are merely infatuated optimists. They will certainly not get good terms of purchase, for the simple reason that a large party in the State, amongst whom are several leading politicians, regard them as purveyors of poison and little better than keepers of houses of ill-fame. The tribunals will be packed against them, and every method of dishonest under-valuation will be remorselessly employed. The third and far the largest class is composed of those sturdy Britons who, realising the facts just recited, are minded to fight for their property, and to resist the flood of Socialistic legislation which threatens to submerge all individual enterprise.

So far we have been regarding the question from the point of view of the owners of breweries and



distilleries. Let us now look at it from the point of view of the State, that is, of the taxpayers, of everybody, in short, who is not a brewer or a distiller. The cost of buying the liquor trade has been estimated at figures varying from £300,000,000 to £500,000,000. The lower is, we believe, the dishonest figure, the higher the honest figure. Whatever the figure may be, State scrip for the amount will have to be issued, and the taxpayers will guarantee the interest at 5 per cent. The taxpayers are therefore entitled to know with what object they are called upon to buy the liquor business. Is it with the object of applying whatever surplus revenue may be realised (beyond the interest) to a national purpose, such as payment of interest on the National Debt? Or is the purchase to be made with the object of suppressing, by progressively severe regulations, the consumption of liquor? The Government must elect which horse it is going to ride, Revenue or Prohibition. If they choose Revenue, then every public official whom they may employ is bound by his duty to sell as much liquor as he can. If they choose Prohibition, then every official is bound, at whatever loss to the revenue, to sell as little liquor as he can. The dilemma has often been stated, but has never, so far as we are aware, been avoided. We know that the prohibitionists are a larger and far more earnest section of the Liberal party than the purchasers for revenue. We can therefore confidently assure the brewers and distillers that they will be swindled over the purchase; and we can as confidently assure the public that they will be hoodwinked into putting their money into a business that is being bought only to be ruined.

Whatever may be our views as to Prohibition or Revenue, there really can be only one opinion as to the dishonesty of forcing a decision of this question during the war. This non-party Coalition Government was formed and is supported upon the understanding that questions of vexed controversy should be deferred. Casting one's eyes back over the last twenty years what are the questions on which the most violent differences of opinion have been discovered? They are Home Rule, female suffrage, and the liquor trade. Every one of these questions is now being forced to a decision in violation of the understanding, by a Parliament which has exceeded its legal life, and which it is admitted by Mr. Asquith and Lord Robert Cecil does not represent the opinion of the nation. Mr. John Galsworthy, a vehement Socialist, let the cat out of the bag in a Sunday paper a fortnight ago. Mr. Galsworthy believes the one thing needful is to get the people back to the land; whether he is right or wrong does not matter. But, cries Mr. Galsworthy, if the thing is to be done it must be done now, whilst the war is on, or it will never be done at all; it must be done by "panic legislation"—those are his words. We do not like panic legislation; and we call upon the Government to observe the compact by which alone it is kept in office.

#### REMUNERATIVE RAEburn.

**T**WENTY-FIVE thousand pounds! What a price for a portrait! And it was more than that by a nice calculation of shillings. Twenty-five thousand pounds for a masterpiece of Raeburn's—the Macnab, the Macnab, a magnificent figure in his Highland landscape, which looked duly, if gloomily, surprised as the auctioneer's hammer came down at Christie's last Friday on this imposing and colossal old gentleman in native costume. There he stood, reminding one partly of Mr. Gladstone in tartan and partly of the figure that used to pose outside the tobacconists' shops, immensely, of course, apotheosised and enlarged. Twenty-five thousand pounds or, deducting income tax, nearly a thousand a year for the happy individual who can do without such a revenue in war-time. Even Christie's experienced a slight *frisson* as this heroic sum was recorded.

It sets us thinking of many things—of the romances

and vicissitudes that hover around that wonderful mart—at once the temple and the Monte Carlo of art, of the ghosts that haunt it, of the Macnab himself, and of other Highlanders who had the canny good fortune to have been painted by the great Scotch master of portraiture—in these latter days a vicarious millionaire with a vengeance; of Raeburn, at whom his giant Southron rivals looked jealously askance, sighing not to have seen the day; of the two ages that we still live in and out of, the mannered eighteenth and the mannerless twentieth. A smile twinkled visibly round the shrewd lips of the rosy-gilled, grey-haired clan-chieftain, a complacent, upstanding presence well satisfied with all that was his, and with the investment so carefully made when he wrote out his cheque of three modest figures for the respectful artist. It has proved a bargain indeed. Twenty-five thousand pounds!

We remember some years ago thinking what a pretty little lever-de-rideau might be made about some great-great-grandmother of a love-stricken and hard-up youth in haste to marry. She should have been painted by Sir Henry in her and his heyday. The youth, proud of her, should, even in extremis, have just refused the last tempting offer of the Sibylline dealer in the same way as Charles Surface at his worst hour disdained to part with the ill-looking little fellow over the fireplace. And then as the firelight flickered the young man should fall into a reverie and dream a dream. That great-great-grandmother should gracefully step out of her old-world frame and command him to sell her, pointing out with a bewitching smile that sentiment in such a case was misplaced; that the past should feed the future; that she for her part would refuse to step back until he yielded to her logic. If he were really fond of her image, she would lead, archly flipping her powdered curls with the tip of her Watteauish fan, he would sell her as she stood to the highest bidder, so that pouting beauty might be justified and proud of her children. The youth, half dazed, should argue (for he is Scotch) and remonstrate. He will not sully his scutcheon by sending her across the Atlantic. But she should tell him that the free new world would prove a pleasant change of air for her, that she only wished that when she eloped with his great-great-grandfather her great-grandmother by Lely had been worth anything to speak of, that cent-percentage was here the requisite, that he should be grateful to Columbus. And at this crisis Strephon's Chloe should enter on tip-toe and join her entreaties to those of the ancestress. And so the curtain should fall, as it fell on the sale of the grand old man ("upright-grand", as they say of pianos) that memorable afternoon. An antique *male* twenty-five-thousand pounder! What sum might he not have achieved had he but been young and a woman. It might have been sold for forty thousand and given to—the rich. That is the sole faint misgiving that disturbs the divine content of the tremendous Macnab.

It is not always so. Do you think that there are no reluctant victims on the walls of Christie's Pantheon, no ancestors that still yearn after their posterity when they are fetched away to deck the rooms of the nouveaux riches—or as may be in the by-and-by of the nouveaux pauvres in some horrible communal Prytaneum? Are there no fair faces that shrink from the prying publicity of that commercial crowd, none who resent the intrusive comments and appraisements, the more exasperating as they are unable to contradict them? Do none of them ever yearn to speak as they recognise, maybe, the unconscious descendants of the man or woman whom they loved? And what tales many of them could utter of broken hearts and fortunes, of ambuscades under the garden-wall where the Cavalier and his lady lay hid, sliced in half, while the stern Cromwellians were purging the old home of idols; of the disinheriting father who transformed the run-away daughter into yon daub of a boy; of the Madonna who was a nun wrestling with her passion for the Florentine



artist; of that beautiful Lady Hamilton there who laughed at Romney before she struck the inspiring attitude. And under the summer moonlight, as these pictures dangle, dumb and supplicating or indignant, do you think, too, that there are no fitting wraiths and whispering voices, no re-encounters of friends long estranged, no duels fought by rivals immemorably held asunder, no idylls and comedies and tragedies renewed? The heated crowd disperses, the sale is over, the traders gloat over or repent their "pedigree" purchases, and count on the fingers of alert memory the likeliest buyers in the market. It will not be long before a few distinguished guests may grace (or disgrace) the board of some new owner and recognise, each of them, the framed face of a forgotten and unforgiving forebear. Those landscapes, too, have they no voices of golden summers, garnered in joy and sorrow? And how the master-spirits who painted some of them must wonder at the confusion of attributed names, so glibly paraded by the boastful lettering. In all things a name works wonders. Only certify an afternoon of condensed and curdling depression to be a Hobbema and it will be hailed as beautiful.

The present, too, is poignantly audible in these echoing rooms. There are pale faces anxiously watching the sacrifice that shall pay their debts. There are speculators bidding in that infectious atmosphere for treasures or tinsel that they can ill afford. The demon of the collector's mania stalks abroad and laughs to know "what fools these mortals be". There are lucky finders also who retrieve ruin by a careless acquisition, and those, moreover, who still linger round a scene in which they cannot participate, and are like the beggars who smell the rich food-incense at the area gate.

We had once occasion to read the unpublished letters of a sparkling eighteenth-century lady, who died young and radiant and smiling through her tears. She recounts how Mr. Christie came down and sold "the contents of the mansion" on the village green. That must have been a jolly auction under the sunny sky with a taste of gipsydom about it that suits the true vagabondage of art. All that has vanished. Mr. Hannan does not now step down from his stately pedestal and "disperse" the contents of any "mansion". If he did he might occasionally inform great families that their heirloom masterpiece was only a clever copy, made and long believed in after the original had been secretly bartered and without my lady's sanction.

All this, and much more, re-arises as we bid a last farewell to the imperturbable Macnab.

"Music when soft voices die  
Vibrates in the memory."

Do the bagpipes, we wonder, ever break his Olympian silence?

#### A CENTENARY: JANE AUSTEN.

ON 18 July 1817 Jane Austen died, leaving the world six novels, four of which at least have been securely added to the select library of literature and delight. That might be said also of "Rob Roy" and "The Heart of Midlothian" (1818) and its companions in the Waverley series, but the other English novels of the period, especially from the female pen, are for the most part happily dead. Only desperate students have mastered books like the "Moderation" of Mrs. Hoffman and the "Self-Control" and "Discipline" of Mrs. Brunton. These titles might be supposed to indicate the same sort of novel as "Persuasion", but the difference in spirit, execution, and humour! Mrs. Brunton in "Discipline" claims an attempt to amuse, but she was one of those dear, good ladies common at the period whom we picture whispering to their heroines, "I could not love thee, dear, so much, Loved I not Hannah More". "There is high authority", explains Mrs. Brunton,

"for using fable as the vehicle of important, even of solemn truth." Nature, too, as Mrs. Squeers remarked, is a holy thing, but that part of it which is human rejoices in humour and humanity. It hates tracts; it does not want to be lectured and improved all the time. It wants to be amused, and it has a feeling for the joy of life which produces art.

Jane Austen, whose most delightful book has been most unsuitably made into a schoolbook in the twentieth century, made little by her art. Bentley bought the copyright of the novels, except one, for £250 in 1832. But the author did not lack the applause of good judges. Walter Scott and, later, Macaulay recognised her perfections. Macaulay, indeed, made a correction on the first page of "Persuasion", which he regarded as worthy of Bentley. Disraeli was reputed to have read "Pride and Prejudice" seventeen times, which is the finest tribute that a reader can pay to an author.

There have, of course, been readers who see nothing in Jane Austen's social comedy and satire—Emerson, for instance; but then he saw a good deal in poor Delia Bacon's lucubrations on Shakespeare. The very refreshment of Jane Austen's work is largely due to its limitations. It is unfair to say that she showed no deep feeling for Nature or religion, nothing, in fact, beyond the restricted good sense of the eighteenth century; but certainly she lacked "la nostalgie de l'Infini", and she did not choose to deal with passion, a thing rarer than people think. We have plenty of both in other novelists. Art in the nineteenth century was bent on being didactic, while in the twentieth it has striven hard to be outrageous. People go on washing their souls in public for the advantage of the reader, and make handsome sums out of the process; but we do not read and re-read them; we do not even necessarily find them refreshing. We weary, too, of the emotional females whose wild and exhausting vocabulary dwells on the raptures of passion or a tawdry imitation of it. Jane Austen may seem cold-blooded to them, but it is because she has the decent reserve of the creator of Diana Vernon. Her little world of a few families well above poverty, yet well below dazzling public notoriety or service, goes on entertaining us with its admirable humour and artistry. We are free at once from the dukes and earls who flourish in the shopgirl's favourite reading and from the sickly emphasis on poverty and early deathbeds popularised by Dickens. There is, indeed, one poor relation in "Emma", and Swinburne declared her to be the greatest of her species in all literature.

"Il faut se borner", said Napoleon; but Jane Austen, with all her limitations, did not blink ugly facts as many novelists have done. She saw that true love overrides rank and all material considerations, including the acquirement of a fatuous mother-in-law. The sordid results to be expected when lovely woman stoops to folly are not concealed, but they are not worried into moral invective. Jane Austen's way is much more subtle, much more effective. She showed how the intensely respectable who keep to the world's eye every particle of the Mosaic code are the worst of offenders. Mrs. Norris, in "Mansfield Park", is one of the most trenchant and disagreeable portraits in fiction. Here is the highly respectable widow of a clergyman who manages to remain socially impeccable, yet is the meanest soul that ever lived on the printed page. The people we meet in this country-house comedy are never impossibly good, and we really like, as we should in real life, designing minxes and walking bachelors whose conversation cannot be described as "improving". We value them for their cunning mixture of human qualities, and even for their little tempers. Thackeray was too hard on Becky Sharp, who after all brought the silly Amelia to her happiness at the end, and would, as a wise lady once said to us, have been an admirable person to take down to dinner. Emma is infinitely more faulty than Jane Fairfax and is

obviously unjust and prejudiced. Yet we do not like Jane, we prefer Emma, and wonder if she quite hit it off with the serious and imperturbable Mr. Knightley. He had almost too much good sense for both of them, and we hope that Emma played on him some of the occasional silliness she derived from Mr. Woodhouse. We like the wicked Miss Crawford, too, in "Mansfield Park", and think she was too good for the priggish Edmund. She would have led him a fine dance, and, to use an eighteenth-century phrase, would have enlarged his understanding.

To decide for one of the novels against another would be as ungrateful as in a company of beautiful women to denigrate one at the expense of another. But "Pride and Prejudice" is certainly the most brilliant in style of all. That self-satisfied and subservient clergyman, Mr. Collins, is very amusing, but too much like a grotesque to be at the height of the writer's art. Yet we cannot be sure of that. There may have been in Jane Austen's day creatures among the clergy with as firm an eye on this present world and as great a deference to female power as poet Young of the "Night Thoughts", who, exclaiming in his verse that "The Visible and Present are for brutes", grovelled before the mistress of George II. for further preferment. Anyway, Mr. Collins is an admirable foil for Elizabeth, the most sparkling of heroines, a fit sister for Shakespeare's Rosalind, and equal to all comers. She would have jested over any wound, as, we think, her creator did when she lost her chances of a husband, from the gentleman whose wife she wished to be "fond of cold veal pies, green tea in the afternoon, and a green window-blind at night", to the "Mr. H. E., who was very pleasing and very good-looking".

Elizabeth is disappointing only when Darcy has declared his love and she has decided to have him. She "immediately, though not very fluently, gave him to understand, that her sentiments had undergone so material a change, since the period to which he alluded, as to make her receive with gratitude and pleasure, his present assurances". Such paraphrase, which robs the modern reader of an expected delight, is characteristic of Jane Austen. The passage is elaborately written, as is shown by the punctuation.

The heroine of "Persuasion" is better equipped with tenderness than Elizabeth, more generally helpful, more obviously fitted for the returning bloom of a long-lost love. Yet Elizabeths are rarer, and do the world in their way quite as much good, though they usually get no credit for it.

When Tennyson went to Lyme Regis and was shown the place where the Duke of Monmouth was supposed to have landed, he exclaimed: "Don't talk to me of the Duke of Monmouth! Show me the exact spot where Louisa Musgrove fell!" We have written in a similar spirit of Jane Austen's characters, as if everybody knew them. Many excellent people find nothing in them, and miss a great and lasting pleasure. But one day they may see the charm. We have known obstinate cases of indifference turn to enthusiasm. Those who do not enter into Jane Austen's world may comfort themselves with the reflection—it is Emma's—that "one half of the world does not understand the pleasures of the other". It is one of those excellent sayings which pass unnoticed in a style which never shrieks at the reader in the modern exaggerations of epigram and paradox. Last year in this REVIEW the merits of that style, apart from its naturalness and happy infusion of slang, were examined with some closeness. Here we need only say that Jane Austen can give us the cleverest people and the stupidest—the cynical indifference of Mr. Bennet to his wife and daughters and the pathetic imbecility of Mr. Rushworth—in writing which is all of a piece, sensible without being dull, brilliant without being exhausting, witty without being uneasy, like the prose of Addison. Macaulay and Verrall have examined the text of the novels with

the scrutinising care which classical scholars devote to Greek and Latin. Jane Austen deserves the tribute: she is a classic.

#### THE SHRILL, SMALL VOICE.

WHILE Heaven was rent and havoc made  
By aeroplane fusillade,  
I heard through all the ravening Raid  
A Voice that scorned to be dismayed.  
Through thunder, tremor, fury, flame,  
Importunately clear it came,  
A valiant sound (recalling Maxse)—  
The shrill, small whistle for a taxi.

And there, methought, is Britain's pride,  
The spirit none can turn aside,  
The spirit quick when Nelson died;  
Cool, calm, unhasting, undefied.

(The House of Commons *wasn't* sitting:  
No Labour member mentioned "Britting".)  
Let Berlin hear it and the Black Sea—  
That shrill, small whistle for a taxi.

IMPAVIDUS.

#### CORRESPONDENCE.

##### THE REFORM BILL.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

14, Great Smith Street, S.W.,

4 July 1917.

SIR,—In a letter appearing in your issue of 30 June your correspondent "Pause" condemns the present Parliament for "carrying through" the Reform Bill "on the sly". May I point out that Parliament has not voluntarily undertaken the gigantic task of reforming the electoral system. The need for a freshly elected Parliament to settle post-war problems and the present uselessness of the register necessitated reform. The chorus of approval with which the suggestion of the formation of the Speaker's Conference was received in the House and in the Press, and the publicity afforded to the progress of the Bill, refutes, I think, the charge of secrecy. The war has not been a cloak for reform; it has been a stimulant, and has caused such concentration upon the problem as has resulted in its speedy solution.

Suffragists do not suppose that the individual vote of a woman bus conductor will preclude the possibility of her losing her work after the war. They do believe that it will help to ensure women's interests being represented on the body that will ultimately determine the conditions of labour. Obviously after the war many men will be restored to their old posts, and it is desirable that they should. This must cause industrial disorganisation, which the suffragist has never claimed the vote will prevent. She does, however, claim that the vote will facilitate reconstruction, and that by ensuring the representation of a large class of workers now unrepresented it will make legislation, if not acceptable, at least possible.

Your correspondent's statement that trade union resolutions in favour of Women's Suffrage "are manoeuvred by astute leaders and do not represent the views of its individual members" is, of course, mere surmise. The many petitions bearing thousands of individual signatures of men trade unionists in favour of Women's Suffrage would seem, however, to refute such a conclusion.

Finally, to instance the ill-effects of extreme democracy from Russia is, I think most people will agree, somewhat premature.

Yours, etc.,

OLIVE A. JETLEY,

(Press Secretary,

National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies).

#### INDIAN FINANCE AND SIR WILLIAM MEYER.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

9 July 1917.

SIR,—I read your criticism this week of Sir William Meyer with a feeling that a great wrong may be done to an honourable and able official, one, I should add, who is a



complete stranger to the writer. If I read aright the signs of the times in India (and I have read Sir W. Meyer's Budget speech with great care and interest) I think that to Sir William Meyer has fallen, as to many of his predecessors in finance, a perfectly impossible task, and that the condemnation you mete out far too unsparingly to an individual should be devoted to that system bequeathed to his successors by Sir David Barbour in 1893. A recent Indian Finance Minister—one far more responsible for the fact that India was "bled white" than Sir William Meyer—declared that Indian finance was "a mere gamble in rain". Given a good monsoon there would be good exports of wheat and rice and jute and other products of the soil, and thus the exchange would be favourable and India solvent. But we can now see that an Indian Finance Minister is trying to operate a currency-mechanism where, if the "gamble in rain" comes off and the seasons are favourable, then, albeit we have given India already all the gold which should be in our bank reserves, it is still impossible for Indian exporters to secure currency! Such is the *damnum hereditas* we owe to Sir David Barbour and the "crime of 1893". And yet, while all this is so evident, the almost universal ignorance of exchange problems has this result, that officialdom really glories in this cruel shirt of Nessus! "Yes", a wise friend at my elbow says, "a shirt of Nessus truly, but remember that a group of highly placed personages have in the last 25 years grown rich beyond the dreams of avarice. For while to official India is left the responsibility attaching to 'the gamble in rain', the 'clever fellows' have made their millions by gambling in silver securities, they having inside knowledge of the operations at hand in that metal by the Government of India, from which knowledge all outsiders are religiously barred". I may remark that the secret purchases of silver this very year have about doubled not merely the price of silver, but the gold value of 500 millions sterling of silver securities.

Therefore I say, do not denounce the Sir William Meyers, but denounce the system of the "artificial rupee"—the sixteenpence for ninepence, to which he and many others have fallen victim. Fine old Sir Robert Giffen, after five years' experience of these vicious experiments in the currency of three hundred million very poor people, wrote to the "Times" (19 May 1898) these ominous words:—

"The highest political issues are also involved. One of the most dangerous things for a Government to do is to tamper with the people's money. Is it certain that the Indian Government can go on long with its present ideas regarding money without producing the gravest complications in the government of India itself?"

A few words in conclusion. In 1878 there was enacted at Washington an Act called the Bland Act. The Bland Act in the fewest possible words proposed to maintain a gold standard for America, but to make large yearly additions of unlimited legal tender silver dollars to the U.S. currency. That was the Bland Act. The Act was at once the target for every kind of criticism here, whether rational or ridiculous, and after many years of trial was repealed in the presidency of Grover Cleveland. When this Bland Act in its every line and section is taken to its bosom by the Government of India, the scribes and Pharisees of our Press, who pursued Dick Bland, of Missouri, to his grave, had yet nothing but praise for the application of his notorious Act to India. In India Sir William Meyer is expected to be generous in public expenditures and yet maintain a gold standard, while adding to that currency each year fabulous masses of unlimited legal tender money in a metal (silver) foreign to the standard (gold). This system had broken down in sight of all men (so at least we were told) after its fair and full trial by a community of prodigious wealth and credit across the Atlantic; then why was it and is it still persisted with in the case of India? In the case of America the Bland Act added only 24 million ounces of silver yearly to that currency, and yet we were assured it menaced the gold standard there, whereas in the past twelve months Sir William Meyer has added 125 million ounces of silver to the currency of India, and though he has done this there is to-day anyunexampled, famine of rupees in India, and because its

Government can now no longer supply its wards with either silver or gold we are being importuned to pump masses of one rupee notes into that currency.

When water will run up-hill then, and not till then, will it be possible for mortal man (Sir William Meyer in this case) to operate such a machine as Sir David Barbour has bequeathed to posterity. It is a "system" that has been the nightmare of every Viceroy and every Finance Minister asked to be responsible for Indian exchange, and at last the game is up.

Mr. Editor, lay the responsibility where it belongs—on quite other shoulders than Sir William Meyer. In 1913, with all this trouble then in full view, a Royal Commission was empanelled to report whether the Bland Act method of currency and exchange was conducive to the benefit of India. It met under the presidency of Mr. Austen Chamberlain, as we all supposed, to do what its terms of reference demanded. Incredible as it may seem, not one question bearing upon the problem, whether after twenty years' trial this Bland Act policy had "made good", was ever asked of one single witness. I was myself a witness, and have read, I believe, every word of the evidence. The tampering with the standard of value; the vast legal tender additions to the currency in a metal foreign to the standard—all this was treated by that Commission as a *chose jugée*. Witness after witness bursting with information and sent all the way from India left the chair without one question asked. The Chamberlain Commission might as well have reported about the satellites around Saturn.

Yours faithfully,

MORETON FREWEN.

[All this is very interesting; but what has it to do with Sir William Meyer's refusal to build a military line from Basra at General Nixon's request?—ED., S.R.]

#### MESOPOTAMIA

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—One of the chief causes of our catastrophes in this war is the social and moral anarchy which has existed for so long in the upper and plutocratic circles. What is called "influence" is a euphemistic term for social blackmail, and when people get honours, billets, and are promoted, not on their merits, but because they know so much about one another that they can't be refused, you cannot expect proficiency or discipline.

The disasters which have too frequently happened in this war, through lions being directed by asses in high command, have been concealed from the people by a tissue of official and Parliamentary lies; and now the people don't believe a word they are told.

This means that the people are practically leaderless, and general anarchy will follow as a consequence.

Yours faithfully,

J. ASTLEY COOPER.

#### "LORD BACON."

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—Who started the atrocious vulgarism of calling the great philosopher-lawyer Lord Bacon? Sir Francis Bacon, the Attorney-General of James I., became Keeper of the Sealer, Custos Sigilli, and signed his letters "Fr. Bacon, C.S.". He was then made Lord Chancellor and Baron Verulam, and signed his letters "Fr. Verulam, Canc.". Then he was promoted to be Viscount St. Alban, and signed "Fr. St. Alban", and his letters were addressed "To the Lord Viscount St. Alban". Milton, who wrote in the next generation, some thirty years after the Chancellor's death, refers to him in the *Areopagitica* as "the Viscount St. Albans". Roger North, who wrote the "Lives of the Norths", in the next generation again (the end of the seventeenth century), calls him "Lord Verulam". Who first misnamed him Lord Bacon? You might just as well say Lord Pitt, or Lord Disraeli. Yet Byron, who was generally very careful on such points, and Macaulay called him Lord Bacon, and everybody has done so since. It may be answered that in the case of a great

man titles are absurd; but you must choose one or the other mode of address. You may say Pitt or Chatham, or Lord Chatham; you may say Disraeli or Lord Beaconsfield; and you must say Bacon or Lord St. Alban. Somebody in the eighteenth century must have started the solecism, but I cannot discover him.

Yours obediently,  
TEMPLAR.

#### RELIGIOUS UNITY IN VIEW OF PEACE.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

90, Cheriton Road, Folkestone,

23 June 1917.

SIR,—Because the point is of keen and anxious interest to all who concern themselves with the higher aspects of our national life, may I raise the question whether the churches and chapels of England are ready worthily to celebrate the peace? Mr. H. G. Wells, in a phrase tinged with something like contempt, has indulged in a rather free fling at "religious professionals". Treat the criticism as we may, it will scarcely be denied that nothing less than scorn, not on the part of a novelist, but on the part of the nation, will await the leaders of religion if, in the grandest and most exciting moment any living eye has ever witnessed, and when the people will need the steadying and unifying forces of religion, the old sectarian divisions and antagonisms are anywhere in sight.

Let me give an anticipatory object lesson. I have some right to say that in this lovely seaside town, when peace is commemorated, there will be a service in every place of worship on the same day and at the same hour. As far as possible the same hymns and prayers will be used. In addition to this, a common, united service will be held in some public building or in the open-air; the clergy and ministers of all denominations will take part.

If this be the right line of action, how can its general adoption be secured? This writer, a Wesleyan minister, ventures to say that in every village, town, and city, the privilege of initiative is, perhaps, with the clergy of the Church of England. Local conditions will, of course, determine many details. The essential thing is that the spirit of unity, expressed at least in harmony of purpose and preparation, shall prevail everywhere—"unity of spirit, in the bond of peace".

This opportunity missed, the blackest page of the war would still have to be written. The historian would be left to say that when the greatest peace on earth was celebrated, although Englishmen had trained and fought and died together on land and sea, the "professionals" of English Christianity, thanking God for victory, remained apart, careful lest the artillery of "church" and the infantry of "chapel" should even then be too near together. The nation was not ready for war; let the church be ready for peace.

Yours faithfully,  
J. EDWARD HARLOW.

#### IMAGINATION.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

The Forest Hotel, Savernake,  
Near Marlborough, Wilts.

9 July 1917.

SIR,—I find it difficult to follow the meaning of what appears in the papers lately, on account of certain words being used to express all sorts of meanings which we cannot find in either Dr. Johnson's or Webster's dictionaries. One is reminded of the "blessed word Mesopotamia" of the old lady who saw in it the epitome of the whole Bible.

The first word so used is "realise"; it means in modern English, saw, felt, heard, noticed, decided, etc., in fact, whatever happens, a man before he does anything has "realised" it first.

For instance, "The man's horse was blown to atoms and he 'realised' it was dead".

This word is merely superabundant, but the newest word takes the place of all other words, and this is "imagination".

I thought imagination was a quality which made a novelist, a writer of plays, fairy tales, or a good liar, but now it appears that a general who has it is invincible, or a politician (this I can follow as diplomacy is "the ability to conceal one's thoughts"), but a man to do any mortal thing must now have "imagination", even to selling fish or driving a taxi, or he is useless.

The third word is "luck", "pure luck". Formerly if a man escaped from death by a miracle, it was said to be through the mercy of the Deity; now it is "pure luck"; or, if a thing goes wrong, a man "curses his luck".

All turns on "luck"; a man does not try to improve his methods. If he fails in anything, he merely says "Just my luck", and keeps on committing the same mistakes.

With these three words "luck", "imagination", and "realise" one can write all day and need not understand one's subject, as the reader can put whatever construction his "imagination" "realises", if he has "luck".

WALTER WINANS.

#### THE POLES.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

110, St. Martin's Lane, London, W.C.2,

10 July 1917.

SIR,—It was with very great regret that I read in the SATURDAY REVIEW of 7 July a rather ill-natured reference to the Poles in a letter signed "F. O.", which, judging from kindly references in the past, I can hardly think would represent the general policy of your paper.

In this letter "F. O." quotes Dr. Dillon as believing that a "regenerated Poland will serve as a buffer State between the Germanic peoples and the East". He, however, begs to differ from Dr. Dillon, and on the strength of "having been in Austrian Poland" he proclaims in sweeping tones that there is a "low state of civilisation and utter disorganisation".

Now, Sir, I might be well content to take my stand with Dr. Dillon against "F. O.", for no one will deny Dr. Dillon's primary authority on such a point, but I should like also to expostulate with "F. O." on this reckless habit of making accusations against a whole nation on the strength of some particular experience.

"F. O." may not know that the peasant population of Galicia is in whole districts not Polish but Ruthenian, and he may have visited certain villages where he was disagreeably impressed; but it is obviously not only reckless but absurd to make this the ground of calumnies on a whole gifted people.

I am, Sir,  
Yours faithfully,  
MIECZYSLAW TULEJA.

#### PROFITEERING.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Scarcroft, near Leeds,

2 July 1917.

SIR,—Referring to the discussion in your columns on this subject, may I point out that a profiteer is a capitalist, large or small, who has made greater profits since the war than he did before its outbreak.

The many thousands of wage-earners who are getting from £5 to £10 a week for work worth £2 to £4 are not reckoned as profiteers, because they have votes, but no capital, nor are the large body of lawyers and other professional men, nor the noble army of political hangers-on who are drawing such handsome incomes for "war work". If you are a mechanic you may treble your wages, or if you are a lawyer you may double your income; but if you are a dairy farmer with a couple of thousand pounds in a business necessitating seven days' work a week, and are enterprising enough to make 6 per cent. on your capital and £4 a week for your skill and labour, then you are denounced without mercy in the Harmsworth Press as a "profiteer".

Yours faithfully,  
C. F. RYDER.



## REVIEWS.

## A VENETIAN CONSTITUTION.

"In the Wake of the War." By Harold Hodge.  
London: John Lane. 5s.

ANY book from the persuasive and instructed pen of Mr. Harold Hodge will always be welcomed in the pages of the SATURDAY REVIEW. It is hardly necessary to say that "In the Wake of the War", which its author modestly calls a tract, is well written in point of style. Those who have followed Mr. Hodge's editorial career will expect to find a political speculation based on wide reading in the library, while those who know that the writer has been a keen participant in politics for many years will anticipate the correction of theory by practice. Mr. Hodge's readers will not be disappointed in either of these respects. We do not believe that the scheme for the rescue of the Empire from the slough of despond unfolded in the volume before us is practicable; but that is merely an opinion, which does not detract from its literary and philosophical merits.

Mr. Hodge, like most of us, is suffering from an attack of political jaundice. He is sick of parties and believes they have had their day. Nobody can more heartily condemn and condemn the action of political parties during the last twenty years than we do. But we are convinced, on historical grounds, that the demoralisation of parties is temporary, and that as representative government can only be carried on by the party system, sooner or later parties will be formed again round new formulas.

One cause of the decadence of the Parliamentary system undoubtedly is the cowardice of the House of Lords. They have been afraid to assert their independence—when the Radical party is in power for fear of the mob; when the Tories are in office for fear of offending their friends. They have been afraid to resist the injection of unworthy persons in their chamber. They were afraid to throw out the Parliament Bill. By this cowardice they lost much prestige, which they are only just recovering, for aristocracies always stand out well in times of war. We cannot, by the way, agree with Mr. Hodge that the King is the Lord's anointed in the eyes of the common people. The deferential spirit is gone, and with it all spiritual authority. The House of Commons has lost prestige quite as much as the House of Lords. The Press has pushed it off its pedestal and, last indignity of all! has ceased to report it. As there are neither orators nor wits within its walls, the public do not lose much by the disappearance of debates from the morning papers.

We go gaily along the path of criticism with Mr. Hodge. It is when he arrives at the unmapped region of reconstruction that we reluctantly part company. Our ex-editor calmly proposes to strip Parliament of all the powers and duties which make it interesting and respectable and to hand these functions over to an Imperial Council of Ten, nominated by the King, and armed with the Referendum in cases of important doubt. To this scheme we object: (1) That Parliament will not allow itself to be stripped, but will struggle manfully for its clothes. (2) That the King cannot appoint anybody of his own motion, not even a gold stick. The King must be advised by somebody, and the nomination of the Council of Ten would then become as much the object of a party fight as the election of the American President. (3) That the Referendum in Australia and in the United States (v. the Oregonian constitution) has been a failure. Mr. Hodge, in short, has provided us with a Venetian Constitution, a Doge and a Council of Ten. What would Lord Beaconsfield have said to this? There is another direction in which we think our author is mistaken, that is in supposing that the Colonies would agree to the common management of Imperial affairs. The Dominion of Canada and the Commonwealth of Australia and New Zealand and South Africa are each and all strongly individualistic in their ideas of autonomy. The Colonial soldiers have fought magni-

ficently, but it is a common though natural delusion to imagine that the Colonies are fighting for the Mother Country. The Colonies are fighting for themselves first and for the Mother Country second. Apart from the great difficulty of drawing the line between Imperial and domestic affairs, an Imperial Council would be certain to open up some very dangerous subjects of discussion, such as tariffs. But that, as Kipling would say, is another story.

## A BATTALION HISTORY.

"The Eleventh Battalion Gordon Highlanders, 1914-1916." Maclure, Macdonald & Co., Glasgow. 1s. 4d. post free. To be had from the Librarian, 11th Battalion Gordon Highlanders, Tillicoultry, Scotland.

WHEN the history of the war comes finally to be written we rather think the wise historian of the future will give a wide berth to many of the so-called "histories" written by brilliant amateurs, and glean more assiduously in books like this modest monograph on the Eleventh Battalion "Gordons". We know something of this gallant battalion, having been actively and intimately in touch with it, and can well understand the pride of a C.O. like Colonel Alford in rearing and bringing it up to be worthy of the great traditions of the British Army, although, indeed, the "Gordons" were always worthy.

As we write we have a bird's-eye view of it when it was first billeted in Castlehill Barracks, in Aberdeen, in the hutments, and later on in that perfect elysium of a residence, the Children's Hospital, whose back windows looked over the green, rolling North Sea, with a "drifter" or a "tramp" manfully breasting the waves; while its more fashionable side looked into the busy mercantile dock beyond the little lawn with its tasselled laburnum that, alas! did not break into flower in our time. There the officers and N.C.O.'s assembled on the stroke of ten to discuss the business of the day. Duty took the writer there in his capacity as mess secretary—no easy sinecure—with a laggard representative from each company to meet the C.O., "enthron'd in awful state", with complaints or non-complaints as to the quality or quantity—preferably the latter—of the Army viands; and although in the ranks when marching "easy", and the light-hearted slogan went up, "Are we well-fed?" the ribald responding as a matter of course "No!" there was never a murmur on those momentous Monday mornings. They were all as meek as lambs that had fed on green pastures. Behind the scenes—well, the analogy between "mess" and "mess secretary" is too obvious for comment here, and it was commented on with much Rabelaisian gusto in less official moments, although, too, one can vouch for the fact that the men "never lacked a good meal".

There are things that will always impress one in the British soldier, no matter how familiarly we look at them—his gaiety, camaraderie, and natural genius of assimilation. The Eleventh "Gordons" were not wanting in these things. There were at least two "Harry Lauders" in "C" Company alone, and a Charlie Chaplin—men who might have made a distinct "hit" on the "legitimate" stage or won recognition as cinema actors. The extempore performances in the huts were as good, and in some things even better than the average music-hall; while their camaraderie was always a touching and ennobling thing, truly altruistic, where the Army ethics of "share-out" were universally understood and practised. Their assimilative qualities once more bore striking testimony to the humorous remark of the naval officer quoted in Mr. Fisher's recent speech that "there is something in your d—d Board School education, after all". There is a great deal in it, as the present war has shown, and the British Army is as good a training ground in some ways as a public school or university

—one learns self-reliance there and the art of using one's wits. The men of the Eleventh who have risen from the ranks to be officers and C.S.M.'s would need a Samuel Smiles to write their biography. It is a modest record of honest strenuous achievement.

We congratulate Colonel Alford on this discreet and unobtrusive tribute to his battalion. Those who are proud to be associated with it will cherish it as a memento of soldiering days among the best men in the world. We hope the idea of the battalion history on this basis will take root and branch. It may be very useful some day.

#### A PIECE OF MELODRAMA.

"Marmaduke." By Flora Annie Steel. Heinemann. 5s. net.

THESE may be nations in the world whose literary instinct is for tragedy or comedy in classic guise. The English instinct is for melodrama, and even our superior writers in unguarded moments fall to it. With few notable exceptions, we appear deficient in that sense of form which is required for the production of pure works of art, and so the interest of modern English literature is mostly in the subject matter, not the workmanship. But what we lose in symmetry we gain in bulk, if that is any consolation to the reader. Of course, the effort of the conscious artist, here as everywhere, is for restraint; but the vast majority of writers give loose rein to their imagination and produce a masterpiece or the reverse thereof with equal rapture. Mrs. Flora Annie Steel has done good work of this peculiar English kind. Her first-hand knowledge of an Eastern country, and a talent for describing men and places, give to such books as "On the Face of the Waters" an interest which will outlast the author's life. But "Marmaduke", her latest work, is in a different category, being outside the sphere of personal experience.

The sardonic old rake, Lord Drummur, who marries a ballet-dancer and reduces her to respectability, who keeps his children in perpetual tremors by his evil temper; his gallant soldier son, the Hon. Marmaduke Muir—a trifle "flamboyant", the author tells us, but so "charming"—always hard up and always trying to get money out of the old man, whom he refers to as "the peer" in conversation with his friends; Marrion Paul, a girl of noble mind but supposed humble origin—she turns out in the end to be the daughter of a Russian prince—who, as a dependant of the house of Drummur, loves Marmaduke from childhood and becomes his guardian angel; the faithful soldier-servant of the hero, who cherishes a hopeless and self-immolating passion for the heroine and talks broad Scotch with mildly comical effect; the secret marriage; the production of an heir to the barony of Drummur after the reader had been led to give up hope of that conclusion; even the dear old, ineradicable "marriage lines" are here virescent. The book includes a fire, a battle, a shipwreck, two sensational escapes from drowning, a frustrated elopement, a carriage accident, and a house of shame. Are not these the known ingredients of melodrama?

The perfect self-devotion of the heroine—which might have made a noble and inspiring story if it had been plainly told—becomes unreal and almost farcical with such accessories. The chapter which describes the camp at Varna of the first instalment of our Crimean army is the best in the book; but even Mrs. Steel's gift for describing foreign places cannot quite atone for the Muezzin's cry of "Al-Sul-lah to khair un mun nun nu", or for the Turkish population calling the heroine Maryam Efendi instead of Maryam Khanum. We feel that Mrs. Steel is here on unknown ground. There is a striking difference between Books I. and II., the portion dealing with life at the old house of Drummur and that which sets out to narrate the Crimean War. The former

has something of the atmosphere of a costume novel of the Bonny Prince Charlie kind, and it is with a shock we learn that Queen Victoria is supposed to be on the throne. Book II. has quite a different atmosphere—more lugubrious and, as far as the account of the Crimean proceedings is concerned, perfunctory, but not more modern; and melodrama is the note of both. The habit, inveterate in both hero and heroine, of diving into seas and rivers from high places when they get the chance, with other features of this book, suggests the cinematograph.

#### LUXURY IN LOUISIANA.

"The Pleasant Ways of St. Médard." By Grace King. Constable. 5s. net.

"DO you remember", says Miss King in the introduction to this book of gracious memories, "do you remember, you who can remember as much as fifty years ago, when your ears hardly reached above the dinner-table, the stories your elders used to tell over the wine and nuts? Stories about their time and their people, their youth and their doings, their ten, twenty, forty years ago"? And she begins, in the manner of one who personally recalls a lost paradise, to retrace the refinements of the life in Louisiana before the crash of the American Civil War. Later, throughout a record of loss and ruin, the retrospective handling is consistently maintained. This gives no hard lines. Its charm is like that of rose-leaves whose fragrance has been preserved by sharp spices, of Olympian beginnings reviewed through a mist of tears, of romance that is resolved into wistfulness, or it resembles somewhat the garden of Monsieur Pinceau, that was "what the old-fashioned 'keepsake' of a romantic era so poetically purported to be: a garden of sentiments". A descriptive passage gives the aroma of the book, and by it one is able to visualise the garden and to enter the mind of its owner, "whose eye roaming over it hardly missed a flower that he loved, a shrub that he cared for: japonica, mimosa, sweet olive . . . pomegranates for the sake of the rich scarlet blossoms that pretty Creole girls used to wear in their black hair . . . the minute picayune out of memory of his mother's garden. . . Violets for another memory, and mignonette to remind him of Paris, hélas! But no lilies, because of their air of piety (or his wife's), no immortelles with their discomforting suggestions. . . No, indeed! for in his garden, as in his life, Monsieur Pinceau indulged his prejudices as far as possible".

Each one of the sixteen sketches in the volume gives some glimpse of the old life, some idea of the grace and charm that distinguished society in the luxurious cities of the South. And whether is portrayed the aristocratic "papa" to whom his wife said "sir" and his servants "master", or the dainty "mama" of sweet nature and angelic presence, or the genial spendthrift common to all times and places, yet peculiar in each case by reason of his own time and country, or the virtuous daughter who supports her sire by "teaching anything she knew to any scholar she could get", or the parasitic Creole who robs her benefactress in the hour of ruin, or the aged slave that remains faithful to her former owners, every sketch conserves some feature or custom of the country before the day of the union of the States and the abolition of slavery.

The principal canvas contains the figures of the Talbots, the typical fine man and fine woman of the New Orleans society. Both might be labelled "The Faithful Warrior", which is the title of a sketch concerning the bravery of either. Of the degree of the destitution they fall into we gain some idea from the confidences Mariana Talbot imagines herself to be making to the pastor of her church. "If", she says, "it were not for the boys' fishing and hunting I do not know what we would do for food. I do the



cooking and washing. It is a miracle how I get a breakfast and dinner every day and a clean shirt for my husband." Earlier in the record of misfortune we mark a fine bit of painting and one that is illuminative of the women of the South before and after the shattering of their care-free world. Mrs. Talbot goes a-shopping. The repayment of an old debt enables her to renew her garments and those of her children. And a radiant day sees the little party taking a mule-car for the city, "that fair region of fashion that had lain so bright in her memory during the stormy gloom of the past four years". The whole picture of this adventure is direct and vivid, but when we reach the general furnishing establishment where the old polite usage obtained between purveyor and clientèle it positively "comes alive", and the reader is drawn into its very atmosphere, as who should attend unseen the impersonal events of a dream. Here, as in pre-war time, Monsieur Volant, acting-principal, receives cordially "our little Madame Talbot", and as they chat he assumes his ordinary attitude towards his lady customers "as if they were children or at best only on the verge of intelligence", while she goes back instinctively to "the former amused attitude of a lady who could not burden her mind with such details as the trouble she gave people or the price of things". It is a pretty comedy. "Our ladies and business methods! Monsieur Volant raised his eyes and hands at the absurdity of the connection. . . . 'When strangers come here, Northerners', he went on, 'and they look at their change and find no pennies, they are amazed. . . . And then we have to explain that we have no smaller coin than five cents, and if we had it we could not make use of it; our clientèle would not take coppers in change'."

An admirable sketch is that called "The Institut Mimi", its object being to show the training of women in a past suave world where the men desired their wives and daughters to be entirely charming, in word and act and dress. Here Mademoiselle Mimi; child of the ruined spendthrift, passes on to her scholars the education she had received at "the St. Denis of New Orleans". For help in the teaching she has only the occasional interference of Monsieur Pinceau, her father, who must always be inculcating his doctrine that "what is not done gracefully, mademoiselle, it is not worth while for ladies to do at all", and who turns a deaf ear to her expostulation: "Eh, papa! . . . The scales and the five-finger exercises; they are not given to us to make us more attractive, any more than the Ten Commandments are".

One of the most interesting points in the book, and most weighty, is the light thrown upon what may be termed the beneficent aspect of slavery. It explains, as perhaps nothing hitherto has done, the attitude taken by such men as General Lee and Hobart Pasha towards the matter. No argument is made or suggested. There is merely to judge from incidents occurring in the course of the story. Much has been written on the affectionate and easily influenced nature of the African, and Miss King has pictures of the loving and beloved negro that are among the best things in her gallery. But very little has been heard of the happy result upon him of a kindly yet firm governance at the hands of a wise master. Here, then, is the opportunity to balance values.

The narrative itself is a pageant of memory. "And", says the author, "what a pageant memory can furnish when one looks back out of an iron age of poverty to a golden age of youth". True. Yet not everyone owns with Miss King the gift to present past scenes as though deriving from the Universal Memory, whence, as some suppose, proceeds each individual and particular dream.

## A FINE CATALOGUE.

"Catalogue of Japanese and Chinese Woodcuts in the British Museum." By Laurence Binyon. Sold at the British Museum. £1 net.

TO the lover of prints the Catalogue of the Japanese and Chinese woodcuts in the British Museum, by Mr. Laurence Binyon, will be welcome, since the unobtainable work of Mr. E. F. Fenollosa alone supplied certain data, most other writers upon the subject having lacked, in England at least, sufficient general knowledge of the arts of Japan or that general æsthetic culture which gives value to criticism, even upon so highly specialised a subject as that of Japanese colour prints. In Germany compilations from French specialists, modified by certain arbitrary estimates of Mr. Fenollosa, have gained currency in translation. It is in France alone that original research has hitherto been combined with valuable and original criticism. Mr. Binyon has brought to the making of his Catalogue a large general knowledge of æsthetics, a long experience in the study of the Asian schools, and a balance and moderation in opinion which will give a value to his book apart from the highly technical knowledge it contains.

Unlike the usual collector of prints, who is well primed with facts which make for sale-room values, the lover of Japanese woodcuts is an explorer in a seemingly limitless land. There are no deep mysteries of margins; even the mechanical quality of the proof is an uncertain quantity, time often adding its quota to the charm of the colour. What there is to know in the point of dates, attributions, and states is combined in this Catalogue for the first time for the student and art lover alike. These prints were popular things related in their conditions of production (at least) to the European broadsheet, even to some extent to the fashion-plate; they were casual in aim and of the moment, yet upon most is shed a romantic quality, a sense of beauty which we should prize in any other art. On a hint from the trade prints of China these Japanese artists have given their nation a thing we shall find nowhere else.

It would be impossible in this short review to enter into questions of chronology and the identification of obscure artists; such things belong to the province of the collector and dealer. The common appeal of the Japanese print rests upon other qualities than rarity; it rests upon compact and daring design, exquisite colour, an infinite range in subject, and upon the expression of rare personalities. The word "colour" is used too often to describe the unique quality of these works; it is doubtless a capturing charm cast upon these designs; it does not close in or limit the achievement of the major artists. It is, however, the greatest asset in the work of the first Japanese print-maker, Haronobu, who first used five colour blocks in lieu of the smaller number of his predecessors and those still earlier craftsmen whose rough woodcuts were smeared with paint. In the combining and contrasting of colour, varied in kind and often of the utmost rarity and subtlety of tone, Haronobu has no rival in his country or, for that matter, in any other. A compact designer, his draughtsmanship is dainty, if a little trite; his vein of invention is delicate and idyllic; he is a charming teller of fairy tales. With him Little Red Ridinghood is safe from the wolf in a world of cakes and honey. The fine processional designs of Kionaga, to whom Mr. Fenollosa gives the premier rank among the artists of the school, bring with them a stronger sense of characterisation and firmer draughtsmanship, little colour, but certain elements which count in the formation of a rarer and more perfect artist, a man of greater artistic and poetic temperament, Outamaro namely, with whom the Japanese print, under the æsthetic limitations of the eighteenth century, reaches its most perfect expression. The aim of Outamaro was to illustrate the grace of woman—the woman of the Voshivara. His gifts have been misunderstood

by his countrymen; his place is singular in the history of design, just as the quite different art of Watteau is unique. Neither has yet attained the full measure of praise which is their due. No Japanese or European has made of the human figure the lovely patterns in which Outamaro has bent his fountain-like women or shown what magic can be wrought by mere spacing. Hardly inferior to Haronobu as a colourist, he sheds I know not what spell of fragrance, what exotic charm upon his work.

It is with this sheltered house of beauty, this cloistered outlook upon the world, that Hokusai was to break for ever. Of protean power and range as a draughtsman, he is one of the world's great inventors; Hokusai was a contemporary of Goya and Turner, each of whom he can outclass. Vividness and range, large conquests among things seen and divined, a disconcerting facility, and the love of adventure each count in his resourceful but irregular art. The concentrated and sequestered aims of the classical painters of his country, the exotic elements borrowed from China, are broken, recast, and poured into the mould of his fantastic temperament, in which Romance and Reality fight an unequal contest.

Hokusai had rivals in the field of sensational realism and melodrama in his imitators and the Toyokunis. There was besides, in a single line of endeavour, that strange physiognomist Sharaku. Each added experiment or novelty, if only in intensive colouring. With Hiroshighe, who influenced Whistler, rain, mist, twilight each in turn was to pass into definite pattern. Hokusai's colour had been arbitrary, a form of heightening of the design; with Hiroshighe a new sense of radiance and ambience is achieved till, at the touch of commercial Europe, the Japanese woodcut withered away and passed into the craftsmanship of the past, to be classed in time among the successes of a nation whose place in art is with the foremost, and in whose inheritance of success we count the work of the maker of colour prints.

### ONCE A MONTH.

The "Cornhill" opens with a story by Mr. Boyd Cable, "In the Mist", in which two English officers have the thrilling experience of blundering about inside the German lines cutting through endless wire to find the way back, and finally escaping just as the mist disappears. In the English lines they see the coat one of them has left on relentless wire. Sir Charles P. Lucas has a good commemorative article on "The Jubilee of the Old Dominion". He describes Canada as "the Index State", which contains in its past "all the elements and features which make up and characterise the past history of the Empire". It is interesting to learn that when Queen Victoria came to the throne there was only one railway abroad in the British Empire, a line fifteen miles long connecting the St. Lawrence with Lake Champlain. J. D. attempts, in "On the Wings of the Morning", that new poetry of the airman's sensations which no one has yet rendered adequately. Mr. Bennet Copplestone, in Part II. of "A Closed Chapter", describes in vigorous detail the good tactics and good luck which cleaned up the mess of Colonel. He tells us that just before action or in it sailors are excited, but not thrilled. They have too much to do. "An action at sea is glorified drill." Lady Poore has a study of the inconsequent and puzzling young lady of to-day in "The Bride's Gift from her Father was . . .". R. G., "A Padre in East Africa", records some odd experiences.

Sir James Willecks opens "Blackwood" with an account of "The Indian Army Corps in France," and the circumstances of its rise in India of recent years. The public knows little of the subject, and should be glad to read Sir James's tribute to our Indian battalions. On the French front they were at a disadvantage, hillmen and adepts at hill warfare occupying the dreary flats from north of Neuve Chapelle to Givenchy. Also the time of year was the most unsuitable in which they could possibly have arrived in France. Under such conditions the Indian Army held its front for a whole year, and its good work is described in detail. "Vedette" continues his lively "Adventures of an Ensign". Mr. A. Blayney Perceval writes as an expert on "The Finest Sport in the World", which is killing lions on horseback. The horse must be a good one, for the writer says: "You must be beyond range of the first rush. I do not believe the horse has ever been foaled to which a lion could not give twenty-five yards start in a hundred from a stand.

He gets off at once from his first movement, and is on the horse before the latter can get his legs fairly under him."

Professor Joly has an entertaining article on "The Origin of the Submarine", dealing with the days long before Holland's invention, when Bishop Wilkins, Messonni, and Drebbel were speculating on the subject. "An Airman's Outings" this month describes "The Daily Round" with admirable verve. We are glad to gather that "Contact", the author, hopes to resume his articles in a few months' time, when he has again taken up active service.

In the "Fortnightly" Dr. E. J. Dillon writes on "Russia and the Peace Danger" in his usual vein, which is not precisely cheering. To dwell on what has not been done and what ought to have been done even when the writer can prove a gift for prophecy is less useful than to supply suggestions for the present and the future. Mr. Archibald Hurd examines the history concerning "A Decisive Battle at Sea", and concludes that an annihilating victory has never been achieved by our navy. The most important thing is that one side should know it is beaten and fear to risk another encounter. Messrs. Claude Grahame-White and Harry Harper put forward a number of suggestions concerning "The Civil Aerial Transport Committee" which are sensible and will be generally supported by those who have thought about the subject with some knowledge of aerial flight behind them. Mr. Sidney Low's article on "The Revival of the Arab Nation" is admirably written, and pays a just tribute to the fine qualities of the Arab.

### INSURANCE.

#### EAGLE AND BRITISH DOMINIONS.

ALTHOUGH the British Dominions General Insurance Co., Ltd., was founded in 1904, it was not until some eight years later that accounts were deposited with the Board of Trade. These showed that, in addition to marine insurance, the original field of enterprise, the company had in 1911 begun to transact a general insurance business, having started fire, employers' liability, and motor-car departments. In that year, when the history of the present important composite office really commenced, the premiums received on the various accounts were as follows:—Marine, £325,432; fire, £9,876, and motor-car £422, only net interests being credited to the employers' liability account. That the magnitude of the marine premium income surprised many persons is undeniable, but what attracted most attention was the balance-sheet, which showed how carefully the company had been managed. Out of an authorised capital of £600,000 the substantial sum of £240,002 had been paid up; there was a marine fund of £204,005, and a fire fund of £5,208, with small sums at credit of the two minor accounts; and there was also a reserve fund of £20,000, supported by £13,021 held for investment reserve purposes, that amount representing the depreciation existing on 31 December 1911.

After the publication of this satisfactory statement the British Dominions Company steadily increased in importance, its accounts showing for the next three years the following results:—

	1912.	1913.	1914.
	£	£	£
Marine premiums .....	328,086	334,601	415,875
fund .....	215,715	224,088	203,678
Fire premiums .....	17,380	23,711	158,291
fund .....	8,343	10,926	61,941
Employers' liability premiums ...	240	347	12,669
fund, net ...	927	1,804	6,921
General premiums .....	8,607	20,578	38,405
fund .....	3,826	9,310	18,515
Accident premiums .....	—	—	1,107
fund .....	—	—	659
Reserve fund, 31 December ...	25,000	30,000	100,000
Investment reserve, 31 December	18,521	31,500	42,000
Paid-up capital, 31 December ...	240,002	250,001	345,002

Owing to delays caused by the war the detailed statement for 1915 submitted to the Board of Trade has not yet been issued, but the briefer account presented to the shareholders proves that in that year, and in 1916, this most enterprising company continued to make extraordinary progress, especially in connection with its marine insurance business. In 1915 the marine premiums, net, amounted to £1,020,354, and £664,943 (65.17 per cent.) was carried forward as an insurance fund, after £15,673 had been written off as loss on securities realised, and £50,000 and £33,000 had respectively been transferred to the reserve and investment reserve funds. Considerable headway was also made by the fire and other minor departments, as their aggregate premium income increased from £206,033 to £276,322, and the amount of the insurance funds from £87,306 (42.37 per cent.) to £135,578 (49.07 per cent.).

Nor was the expansion of the business on a less im-

(Continued on page 34.)



## "Burn Less Coal!"

The Ministry of Munitions is desirous of impressing upon the public the national duty of limiting in every way possible the domestic consumption of coal. Valuable derivatives of coal, essential for the manufacture of high explosives, are recoverable only when the coal is treated as in the retorts of gas works—they are wasted when raw coal is burnt in open grates or kitchen ranges. Whenever circumstances permit, therefore, coke and coal gas should be used instead of coal for all domestic purposes.

So far as cooking is concerned, the Gas Cooker has already ousted the coal range from the kitchen of to-day—it serves its purpose in so cleanly, efficient, and economical a manner as to have achieved a high position in the confidence of both the housewife and the cook.

A coke stove, quite as efficiently and economically, fills the dual rôle of a source of hot water supply and refuse destructor—abundance of hot water and daily destruction of refuse being indispensable conditions precedent to health—to communal as well as individual well-being.

But if gaseous fuel be preferred throughout, the Gas Water-Heater and Gas Incinerator provide respectively for hot water supply and refuse destruction. The former yields abundant hot water at any moment, day or night, without the least trouble to anyone. The latter readily reduces kitchen and garden refuse, wet or dry, to a clean and innocuous ash—which may then *safely* be deposited in the dustbin to await removal. Both appliances consume just so much fuel as is necessary *and no more*.

Fuller information will be freely furnished by the Secretary, British Commercial Gas Association, 47 Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.1

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King's Head is stronger. Both sold at 10d. per oz.

## Cigarettes

5d. (Medium) for 10

Cardboard Boxes of 50—2/-

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### THIS BADGE

worn by members of the present Expedition, was first used by the Society of Friends in their Relief Expedition during the Franco-Prussian War, 1870-71.



£140,000

has already been raised by the Society of Friends for relief work among the suffering victims of the War.

## HUNDREDS OF COTTAGES and Wooden Houses

have been built in France and Holland by the Society of Friends—in France to provide temporary homes for the destitute people in villages destroyed by bombardment and fire, and in Holland for the Belgian refugees. Fifty additional wooden houses are about to be erected in the newly liberated villages in France at the special request of the French Minister of the Interior.

## A Sanatorium for Refugees

is being organised for victims of tuberculosis due to overcrowding and insanitary conditions of devastated areas.

## The SOCIETY of FRIENDS

has already raised and expended over £140,000 for the work of relief carried on by about 200 of the

Society's representatives among the suffering victims of the war in France, Holland, and Russia.

TO MEET PRESENT COMMITMENTS

**£1,500 per week is required**

and the public are earnestly asked to support this ever-extending work of Christian benevolence.

Contributions may be sent to Miss A. RUTH FRY, the Honorary Secretary to the War Victims' Relief Committee, at Ethelburga

House, 91 Bishopsgate, London, E.C., who will gladly furnish any further information that may be desired.

(Continued from page 32.)

portant scale last year. Marine premiums increased by £464,465 to £1,484,819, and the fund by £314,836 to £956,739, or 64.44 per cent.—this after provision has been made for excess profits duty, after £10,578 had been written off as lost by the sale of securities, and after £50,000 and £5,000 had been transferred to the two reserve funds. In the case of the smaller accounts the expansion, although much less sensational, seems to have been relatively almost as great, the premiums increasing by £34,772, to £311,094, and the fund by £36,461 to £172,039, or 55.30 per cent., provision having in the first place been made for the excess profits tax.

The present condition of this company is shown by its accounts and balance-sheet to be of notable strength—almost wonderful in view of the brief age of the business. Out of an authorised capital of one million pounds £775,014 had on 31 December last been subscribed and £380,292 paid up; the percentage of the year's premiums reserved was in all cases considerably more than was likely to be required; £200,000 was held as a general reserve fund, and the £80,000 investment reserve fund more than covered the depreciation shown by the stocks and shares constituting the bulk of the assets, exclusive of the Eagle fund, which was taken over at the end of September last. As a matter of fact the British Dominions Company—to use the old title—appears to have been developed on sound underwriting principles from the outset—rapid expansion not having led to extravagant expenditure or prevented the steady acquisition of funds and stability.

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